

FEBRUARY 18, 2013

Received & Inspected

MAR - 5 2013

FCC Mail Room

FCC,

THE UPTOWNS PEOPLE LAW CLINIC STATED THAT YOU WERE DOING A INVESTIGATION CONCERNING THE PHONE RATES AT THE PRISON.

I JUST WANTED TO WRITE A LETTER CONCERNING THE ISSUE. OBVIOUSLY THE RATES ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUE. WE ARE PAYING A SUBSTANTIAL COST TO CONTACT OUR FAMILIES, LAWYERS, AND LOVED ONES.

THE PROBLEM IS NOT JUST THE RATES, BUT THE FACT THAT THERE ARE OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE. IN THE FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM, THEY CAN BUY PHONE TIME. THEY CAN PLACE IT ON A NUMBER AND MAKE CALLS AT A SUBSTANTIALLY CHEAPER RATE. THE CALLS ARE STILL MONITORED JUST LIKE HERE.

PLUS, WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE PHONES NOT WORKING AND NOT BEING MAINTAINED. PLUS, IF YOU ARE CUT OFF, YOU HAVE TO CALL THE COMPANY, AND THAT HAPPENS A GREAT DEAL. YOU ARE THEN CHARGED FOR HAVING TO CALL BACK, WHICH HAS AN INITIALLY HIGHER CHARGE FOR THE FIRST TWO MINUTES. SO EACH TIME YOU ARE CUT OFF, YOU HAVE TO PAY THAT TWO MINUTE FEE AGAIN.

I HAVE BEEN USING THIS SYSTEM FOR 23 YEARS. I AM NOT SURE HOW LONG CONSOLIDATED HAS BEEN IN THE SYSTEM. BUT I CALL ONCE A WEEK OR MORE. MY FAMILY SPENDS ABOUT 40-50 a MONTH FOR THE CALLS. THAT IS TOO MUCH MONEY. THIS CAN BE DONE CHEAPER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

STEVE SCOTTI, #B-15388  
MENARD CC, Post box 1000

Received & Inspected

MAR - 5 2013  
FCC Mail Room

Mr. James D. Hardin II, AJ-1593  
SCI-Forest  
One Woodland Drive  
Marienville, PA 16239-0945

26 February 2013

FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St., SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Criminal usury and  
predatory rates being  
charged to inmates  
nationwide and their  
family members

Dear Commissioner Clyburn,

I recently read a quote from you...

"Most inmates, along with their families and  
friends, are low-income, so in-person visits  
due to distance and expense are infrequent."

and nothing could be more truthful. Because I have no real income I'm  
incumbent on receiving money from family, friends or anyone that wants  
me to call them so I can purchase a pre-paid telephone calling card from  
our prison's commissary. I'm incarcerated at the State Correctional  
Institution at Forest, located in Forest County, PA.  
For me to call my daughter in Pittsburgh (Allegheny County) it costs me  
\$5.35 for 15 minutes if I use a pre-paid calling card. If I call  
collect she gets gouged even a couple of dollars more. For me to call  
my younger sister in Richmond, IN it costs me \$9.60 for a 15 minute call  
if I use a pre-paid calling card. If I call collect it costs her  
approximately \$14.00 to accept the charges for a 15 minute call.

The aforementioned rates are criminal usury and predatory rates.  
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania receives a kickback from Global Tel  
Link our inmate telephone supplier of 44.5% on every dollar. The last  
time I checked, 8 years ago, our state received 7 million dollars that  
year in telephone fee kickbacks from GTL. No business is allowed to  
charge 44.5% interest in Pennsylvania. Anyone who would try to charge  
that kind of interest would be indicted for Criminal Usury, be jailed,  
fined, and possibly serve time in jail or prison. But because this  
criminal act is being perpetuated by the state our state Attorney  
General and State Auditor refuse to do anything about it. It is a form  
of Organized Crime being perpetuated on the very poorest of the poor.

States award their inmate telephone contracts to the company that  
pays them the largest kickback which they try to euphemize by calling a  
"surcharge fee". It's a nationwide R.I.C.O. when it's being perpetrated  
on innocent family members or loved ones of those incarcerated who are

already facing severe hardships. You recently published a notice seeking input on this subject matter so I'm taking the time to write you in hopes that you'll spearhead new FCC regulations and put a stop to companies like Global Tel Link charging criminal usury predatory rates nationwide and kicking back criminal usury predatory rates to states for awarding GTL etal these lucrative contracts. New FCC regulations and tough oversight enforcement is the only thing that will stop GTL etal who operate this way with impunity.

The following...

Prison Legal News  
P.O. Box 2420  
West Brattleboro, VT 05303  
ph# 802-257-1342  
E-mail: [info@prisonlegalnews.org](mailto:info@prisonlegalnews.org)  
Website: [www.prisonlegalnews.org](http://www.prisonlegalnews.org)

conducted a very thorough nationwide report titled "Nationwide PLN Survey Examines Prison Phone Contracts and Kickbacks" by John E. Dannenberg. It was published in their April 2011 edition of Prison Legal News, Volume 22, No. 4, April 2011. You can request a copy of it by contacting them.

Let me inform you of the latest trick GTL is perpetuating on we inmates and our loved ones. They started blocking almost all of our collect telephone calls to our family members and loved ones under the false excuse "GTL does not have a contract to collect fees from the carrier you're calling, therefore, the party you're calling will need to call GTL and set up a pre-paid calling account." Naturally this is a complete lie on GTL's part. We've been calling those same telephone numbers for years and GTL has been collecting their fees from those carriers for all those years now all of a sudden GTL claims they don't have a contract to collect their fees from those same carriers. I had a family member call GTL and ask GTL for the name of a carrier they do contract with so my family could get them to provide telephone service and I could resume calling them collect? They were told a supervisor would call them back...but no one ever called back. GTL is forcing our family members and loved ones to buy blocks of prepaid calling time e.g., \$100, 00 at a time then charging them about \$120.00 for a \$100 block of prepaid phone time. They claim the additional monies are a processing or service fee. GTL is really taking severe advantage of us and our families. GTL is like the Sword of Damocles hanging over our heads!

Do you think there is anything you can please do to break up these monopolistic practices that allow inmate telephone providers like Global Tel Link etal to charge criminal usury predatory rates to we inmates and our family members and loved ones? If so can you please advise at your convenience? Anything you can please do to help will be very greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for caring enough to look into this matter. Hopefully you'll be successful in adopting new FCC regulations putting a stop or cap on these predatory rates they're forcing on a captive audience that has no other choice.

Thank you very much for all your valuable time and any consideration afforded this request. God bless and best wishes.

Sincerely,

*James D. Hardin II*

Mr. James D. Hardin II, AJ-1593  
SCI-Forest  
One Woodland Drive  
Marienville, PA 16239-0945

cc: File

# Jail's revenue from phone calls could fall

*Westmoreland lockup netted \$270K from inmates last year*

BY AMANDA DOLASINSKI

Inmate phone calls generated about \$270,000 last year for the Westmoreland County jail, but the regulation of interstate phone call rates could slash that number.

In response to long-standing petitions asking for the regulation, the Federal Communications Commission recently published a notice seeking public input.

Interstate calls from the Westmoreland County jail cost 40 cents per minute plus a \$3.45 hook-up fee, according to the jail handbook. A 15-minute

phone call costs \$9.45 at that rate.

Inmates placed 71,658 phone calls from the jail last year, according to Warden John Walton.

The FCC reports interstate costs vary across the country — from \$2.05 at a prison in Montana to \$16.55 from a prison in Idaho for a 15-minute phone call.

The commission is reviewing a proposal to lower interstate rates, cap rates and end exclusivity agreements with telephone providers.

"The telephone is a crucial instrument for the incarcerated and those who care about them because voice calling is often the only communications option available," FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn said in a statement.

"Most inmates, along with their

families and friends, are low-income, so in-person visits due to distance and expense are infrequent," he said.

Inmates at the Westmoreland jail can receive up to three visits a week. They have access to unlimited phone calls, Walton said.

"If it's available to them, we encourage them to make phone calls," he said.

The impact of lower phone rates would result in less money for the two accounts the fees support, Walton said.

About half of the money generated is put into the general operating budget, and half into the inmate welfare fund, he said.

*Amanda Dolasinski is a staff writer for Trib Total Media. She can be reached at 724-836-6220 or [adolasinski@tribweb.com](mailto:adolasinski@tribweb.com).*

To whom it may concern:

2/23/13

My name is Ashly Eli. I am writing in regards to the exorbitant phone costs my family & friends have to endure. Since my incarceration I was only able to make three phone calls one to my father, one to my power of attorney, and one to my children's father.

There are not many people in my life to contact, but because the phone rates are so high I can't even contact them. Most people are too busy to write, & a letter can only convey so much. It means so much to hear a loved ones voice when you've been separated. My loved ones cannot afford to visit me because they live in Montana.

Thus, the only contact we have is via mail. I expect to be incarcerated until 2018. That is a long time to go & not have meaningful contact w/my loved ones. I implore you to please consider some way to drop these excruciatingly expensive phone rates so that myself, & other indigent inmates, may hear our loved ones voices - to know that we are still loved. To be able to hear that in someone's voice makes all the difference.

Received & Inspected

MAR 5 2013

Thank you for your time & consideration

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MAR - 5 2013

FCC Mail Room

FCC Mail Room

Sincerely,

Ashly Eli

*[Signature]*

Dear, Heard FCC

'WC Docket NO. 12-375'

2/17/2013  
Received & Inspected

MAR 05 2013

FCC Mail Room

Hello, How are you doing? I'm doing good

I'm happy so help support for we deaf need want videophone, captioned telephone. I'm honest not know tty then me did call to family but when come visit my father say high bills \$30.00 15min really silly raise money wow can't believe it him say no good tty high bills but my family all know want high bills tty call to family and friend not answer well. we deaf not much use tty Block no tree but credit high bills forget it I'm really want so videophone, captioned telephone sign language chat person right understand videophone

Daniel Jr

Thank you

so

mush

Smile

MAR - 5 2013

FCC Mail Room

1

"Meeting Chairman Julius,"

I hope that this letter will find you in the Very Best of health Mentally, Physically, Emotionally and spiritually...

Please allow me to introduce myself to you. My name is Brandy Morgan. I am an Inmate incarcerated at Stateville Prison. The reason I am writing you are, we the inmates at Stateville are face with a serious Problem! in order for these issues to be resolved the people first need to know that they even exist.

this is the issues at hand. The Phone system! Inmate need someone to lobby the Legislature for action on several key issues Fair Pricing for products and services.. the Phone Price is higher than the national average telephone rates for Example as well as Product Prices in Prison Commissaries and Vending machines are significantly higher than those charged the general public on the outside, Producing millions of dollars in unjustified revenues to companies providing those services and products My Family can't keep on paying them higher pricing



(2)

For Products and services. So will you Please  
advocate Fair Pricing For Inmate Products  
and services?

P.S.

thank you very much for  
your time and help!!

Brandy Morgan!

This is a Public Comment for WC Docket Number 12-375

Received & Inspected

MAR 05 2013

FCC Mail Room

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW RM: TW-B204  
Washington DC, 20554

Shawn Orndorff  
838094/J-B-23  
Clallam Bay Corrections Center  
1830 Eagle Crest Way  
Clallam Bay WA, 98326

February 18, 2013

RE: Phone Justice

Dear Secretary:

I am contacting you in order to express my opinion about the Prison Phone System. I have been incarcerated in Washington State Prison System since 2002.

I have had nothing but negative experiences with the prison phone system since my first day of incarceration. My family and I have spent thousands of dollars over the last ten years just to maintain contact and allow me to be a part of my childrens lives.

The different phone companies that the Washington State Department of Corrections has contracted with over the years has varied. They have all extorted my family and monopolized the prison phones. They have placed blocks on family members phones, forcing them to establish an account with them, which in turn gives them higher profits.

Our phone calls are consistently dropped for no reason, an entire phone bank at a time in some cases. These I believe are computer generated programs that randomly pick phone locations and shuts them down briefly so that the prisoners will have to call right back. This leads to double profits. The phone companies make it such an impossible task to get ahold of a customer service representative, that people rarely are able to complain and ask for refunds.

In another situation. We have mailed in money to a prepaid debit account. The check was cashed and the money was never placed on my account. It took us three months and much persistence before we were able to get the money on my account. Had we not been persistent we would have never gotten that \$60.00 credited to my debit account. I believe it is a regular practice of theirs to do things like this knowing that it is such a pain to get someone on the phone, that most people will give up.

I use the phone several times a week. My family and I spend over a couple of hundred dollars a month on phone calls. This is a necessity to maintain a relationship with my spouse and children. I am very active in my childrens lives and due to the location of the prison, we count on the

phone to maintain our relationship.

My girls, Cheyanne, Taylor, Melissa, Alexa, Hayli and Cassie are deprived of quality time due to the cost of calls. A twenty minute call at a time is not much time to speak with a couple different kids at once.

They make the phone system so unfair and expensive that it is a burden on our family just trying to maintain ties. And on top of that the phone cuts off for "Three Way Call Alert" when we do not even have three way calling features on our phone. This is a regular thing that occurs often with no way to get reimbursed. When we complain, they state that cell phones and cordless phones will set that off as well. This is very bothersome due to the fact that not many homes have land lines or corded phones anymore. The recording says "Three Way Call Alert" not "cell phone or cordless phone or three way call alert" and then disconnects the call. This forces us to have to call back spending double the amount on a call. This usually happens within the first five minutes of the phone call, and I believe is computer generated as well. I believe it is a random action that takes place to increase the profits.

I believe that free calls should be encouraged to maintain family ties and support, cheaper phone rates would allow prisoners to maintain those valuable ties and relationships. This will increase the rate of families staying together and having a better chance of staying together through this tough time of incarceration.

I thank you for taking the time to read this as it is of great importance to express my concerns, experiences and wishes that something be done about the price gouging and monopolies that occur with the phone systems across the country.

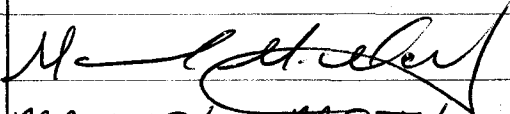
Sincerely,

Shawn Orndorff

MAR - 5 2013

To: Whom it MAY CONCERN, FCC Mail Room FEB 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
(FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION)

I'm writing you about the extreme phone rate that we are forced to pay. I AM currently housed at Stateville Correctional Center AND I use the phone very often. I have been incarcerated for 12 years in which 4 of those years I did in the County jail AND the other 8 years was split even from Menard Corr. Ctr to Stateville Corr. Ctr. These rates are CRAZY AND unjust to prisoners, and our families. WE ARE paying from 7 to 10 dollars per call. This is basically our only way to speak to our families AND the prices are just wrong. I am requesting that your office could please look at these phone rates in Illinois. Thank you for your time AND patience. GOD Bless.

Bl   
MANUEL METLOCK #R34453  
Stateville Corr. CTR,  
P.O. Box 112  
Joliet, IL  
60434